

HOLT URGES OBAMA TO RAISE ISSUE OF SEAN GOLDMAN'S RETURN WITH BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

(Washington, DC) – Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) this week wrote President Obama, in advance of the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh, and urged him to raise the issue of Sean Goldman's return to the U.S. with Brazilian President Lula. In the letter, Holt wrote the President to urge President Lula and the Brazilian legislature to take whatever actions are necessary to bring Brazil into immediate compliance with its obligations under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Parental Abduction. Last week Holt met with Brazil's ambassador to the U.S. and several members of Brazil's Congress. Holt expressed that resolution of this case – per the terms of the Hague Convention - is of paramount importance to the United States. The text of the letter is below.

September 21, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you prepare for the G20 summit, I ask that you take the opportunity to discuss with Brazilian President Lula an issue that continues to be of great importance to me and many Americans—specifically, Brazil's ongoing failure to comply with its international treaty obligations under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

As you know, my constituent, David Goldman, has been attempting for over five years to retrieve his son, Sean, from Brazil. Sean was the victim of international parental kidnapping by his late mother in June 2004. Prior to her death last year, Ms. Goldman divorced Mr. Goldman in the Brazilian courts and subsequently married Jao Paulo Lins e Silva, a prominent lawyer from a wealthy and politically powerful family in Brazil. Despite the fact that Mr. Lins e Silva has no biological or legal connection to Sean under U.S. or international law, for the last several years he has waged the equivalent of legal guerilla warfare to keep Sean in Brazil.

Mr. Goldman has struggled to get the Brazilian courts to fulfill their obligations under the Hague Convention and return Sean to the United States, thus far without success. Even the Brazilian Central Authority—the Brazilian entity responsible for ensuring that country's compliance with the Hague Convention—has filed petitions in Brazilian courts on Mr. Goldman's behalf, urging that Sean be immediately returned to the United States per the requirements of the treaty. Amazingly, the Brazilian courts have even gone so far as to entertain motions questioning the legality of Brazil's accession to the treaty brought by a political party in Brazil that is reportedly connected to the Lins e Silva family.

I know that you raised this issue with President Lula when he visited the United States in March, but I believe it is imperative that you raise the issue with him again at the G20 summit this week. Mr. Goldman is just one of several dozen parents whose children are being held in Brazil in violation of the Hague Convention, and there is clearly more President Lula and the Brazilian legislature could do to expedite the resolution of these cases. Please convey to President Lula your request that he and the Brazilian legislature take whatever actions are necessary to bring Brazil into immediate compliance with its obligations under the Hague Convention. It is long past time for Sean to be reunited with his father.

Thank you for your inspired leadership of our country during these very challenging and often troubling times.

Sincerely,

RUSH HOLT

Member of Congress